



Conservation Conversations

Division of Conservation
Department for Natural Resources
Energy and Environment Cabinet

Issue 16

Presidential Comments

One of the primary factors in the tremendous success of conservation programs over the last 75 years is the concept of local leadership. When the Soil Conservation Service was founded, leaders at that time realized that resource concerns and their solutions were best identified by local people. The structure of local conservation districts being administered by a board of supervisors has served us well for all of these years.

Local leaders have the knowledge of conservation issues within their district

and are much closer to the people within their district. In my opinion, the concept of local leadership is the cornerstone principle around which all conservation programs must be built if they are to be totally successful at the local level. I have also observed that the success and interest level of conservation districts varies widely from place to place within Kentucky. The concept of local leadership places all of the responsibility of identifying resource concerns and implementing the programs to address these concerns completely on the back of

the local conservation district board members.

As funding levels at all levels of government continue to be under tremendous pressure, I would encourage all conservation board members to do a self-evaluation of their district programs. If you come to the conclusion that your efforts are a complete success, then continue full speed ahead! However, if you conclude that improvements are needed to best serve the needs of your respective district, then I encourage you to move forward

immediately to change the direction and purpose of your district programs to best serve the needs of the citizens of your district. Challenging times will require that all of us be innovative and open minded about the future of conservation programs at the district level all across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. That's the way I see it.

Dan Ellison
President, KACD

Butler County 4-H Craft Camp

In June the Butler County Cooperative Extension Service hosted a 4-H craft day camp. Approximately 20 children attended the camp daily. Lloyd Saylor, Butler County 4-H agent, was the coordinator and leader of the event. Students ranged in age from pre-school through high school were able to at-

tend the camp.

Each day the children made various crafts to be entered as exhibits in the Green River Catfish Festival, which is held during the Fourth of July holiday. For one day of the camp Chris Oelschlager with the Kentucky Division for Forestry and Shanna Drake with the Kentucky

Division of Conservation utilized a natural resources theme and worked with the children on making leaf collections. Saylor transported the students to the Morgantown City Park where they collected ten different leaves from common trees in Kentucky. Once the leaves were collected the students

went back to the extension office to begin labeling and assembling the projects.

Approximately ten leaf collection books were on display at the festival. Students were awarded ribbons and monetary premiums for their entries.

2012 EQC Earth Day Awards

Two Kentucky Conservation Districts were honored at the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission Earth Day Awards Ceremony held on April 13, 2012 at the Berry Hill Mansion in Frankfort.

The Marshall County Conservation District was recognized for their promotion of conservation and natural resources within their county. The district participates in the local recycling program, promotes Earth Day and Arbor Day activities, provides dead animal removal and assists local landowners with the creation of agriculture water quality plans. The district has also been working for the betterment of their county through developing a nature trail surrounding Lakeland Wesley Village and assisting with best management practices at the Mike Miller Park. Other projects the district has worked with include the annual Agricultural Day for fourth graders, providing edu-

cational models for use in schools, and help with tree identification and land markers.

The Floyd County Conservation District was recognized with the Public Service Award.

The two employees of the conservation district provide educational and technical assistance to Floyd County residents. The district conducts workshops on various topics, including ginseng and hay production, and has given out several thousand tree seedlings. The district also serves as a work-based learning location for the Carl D. Perkins Job Corps Center, through which students from throughout the United States have an opportunity to earn



credit in their vocational studies, which enables them to better understand environmental and agricultural issues. The district also provides assistance to the Elkhorn Environmental Education Park.

Being recognized as an environmental leader is a wonderful thing for a conservation district. The nomination period for the 2013 Earth Day Awards ends on Jan. 15, 2013. Nomination forms can be found on the EQC's website (<http://eqc.ky.gov/Pages/EarthDay.aspx>).

Steve Coleman Announces Retirement

Steve Coleman, long time director of the Division of Conservation, announced his retirement earlier this month. Coleman has served the Commonwealth of Kentucky for 37 years, all within the conservation community. He has worked closely with the conservation and watershed conservancy districts, the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts to bring about many changes on which the districts depend. Programs such as Direct Aid, the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program, the infrastructure portion of the Kentucky Equipment and Infrastructure Revolving Fund Loan Program, the Districts in Good Standing Program and many others are the direct result of Coleman's work.

"I have been blessed to learn from, work alongside and share great accom-

plishments with so many wonderful individuals and dedicated employees at the Division of Conservation since January 1976. It's hard to believe that the years have gone by so quickly. It has been a pleasure to have watched so many individuals develop into professional public servants with a shared passion for soil and water conservation," Coleman stated in his retirement announcement. "Ordinary people doing extraordinary things exemplify those within the Kentucky conservation partnership."

Coleman and his wife Donna will both be retiring as of December 31, 2012. They plan to spend time with their children and grandchildren. Sam and Jessica Coleman are the parents of Wyatt Coleman, and Kyle and Jessica Coleman are the expectant parents of Steve's future granddaughter.



Mr. and Mrs. Steve Coleman

Elliott County Expands Building to Protect Equipment

The Elliott County Conservation District has invested a lot of taxpayer dollars into rental equipment for landowners to protect and address specific resource concerns. The board realized that a major reason some of the equipment seemed to be deteriorating rapidly was excessive exposure to the weather, and a remedy would need to be implemented soon to reduce further deterioration. The district had no resource large enough or that was available to house the equipment in the winter or when there was no usage. The prospect of constructing a structure was discussed

in detail by the board and finally they settled on attaching a 1,500 sq. foot addition to the existing office building. The reasoning as stated by Chairman Skaggs was it would then be a multi-purpose structure that could house the district's rental equipment during idle periods and be available for utilization for their fourth-grade field day or other events as needed. The



structure is now complete, and the district's equipment will spend this winter and future winters under roof and out of the elements. This will extend the life

and the investment that the Elliott County Conservation District board has made for their county taxpayers.

Rockcastle County Farmers/Business Banquet

The Rockcastle County Farmers/Business Banquet is held annually to recognize outstanding contributions made by individuals that result in a better overall community for the people of Rockcastle County. There were 225 people at the banquet to witness awards presented to business leaders and outstanding farmers. The hosting of the event is alternated every other year between the Rockcastle Kiwanis Club partnering with the Rockcastle Chamber of Commerce and the Rockcastle County Conservation District. The featured speaker was Jeff Sheppard, former basketball player with the University of Kentucky and MVP of the 1998 men's basketball championship. Sheppard talked about his experiences playing basketball for the University of Kentucky and the Atlanta Hawks.

During the ceremony Jack Dailey was inducted into the Rockcastle County Farmer's Hall of Fame. Agriculture leaders created the Farmer's Hall of Fame to recognize outstanding farmers in the county who have achieved a legacy of outstanding leadership within the farm community. Jack Dailey was



Corey Craig (right) inducts Jack Dailey into the Hall of Fame.

born in 1934 and married Vira Clark in 1952. They have two children, Jack Jr. and Sandra, and one granddaughter, Scarlet. Dailey is a member of the Wildie Christian Church where he has been a deacon since 1956 and an elder for 5 years. Dailey and his father owned and operated Dailey Electric for 18 years. He later became a teacher at the Rockcastle County Vocational School where he taught electricity for 23 years. Dailey began his farming as a young boy on his grandfather's farm and continues to work the same land, where he raises beef cattle and hay. He has consistently used best management

practices on his land and truly believes farmers are supposed to be good stewards of the land. Dailey has served on the Rockcastle County Conservation District board since 1967, many years as treasurer. His contribution to agriculture and the leadership he has given to Rockcastle County is exemplary.

Also during the ceremony the district present-

ed the Master Conservationist award to Scott Adams. This award recognizes outstanding achievements and installations of best management practices intended to protect soil and water resources. Adams owns 87 acres within the Dix River watershed and maintains a herd of approximately 25 head of beef cattle. He has participated in the Natural Resources



Randall Templemann (left) presents Master Conservationist award to Scott Adams

Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program. With the assistance of this program he has installed 20 feet of pipeline and one frost-free watering tank, installed 3,860 feet of fence to keep livestock from degrading wooded areas, excluded livestock from a seasonal flow stream by installing 915 feet of fence and installed one steam crossing. Adams realizes the importance of forage quality and adheres to rotating pasture fields to prevent overgrazing which can lead to erosion. Scott and his wife, Angie, have 2 daughters, Charity and Destiny.

Third Graders Learn About “Food For America”

“What’s the difference between white eggs and brown eggs?” asked Wes York. (Pause...No answer.) “Where do white eggs come from?” he asked, prompting further. “Chickens!” the third graders eagerly responded. “So where do brown eggs come from?” he asked. (Pause...) “Roosters!” they exclaimed.

Caldwell County Elementary School third graders recently continued a long-standing tradition of tracing food to its agricultural source as part of the Food for America campaign. Led by Caldwell County High School agriculture advisors, Wes York and Magen Roberts, and student teacher, Cacy Ellis, local students experienced firsthand the importance of farms in our everyday lives.

For more than three decades, third graders here and across the nation have taken a trip to a grocery store, farming operation and an agricultural business to learn how their food gets from farm to table. The annual program is sponsored by the CCHS FFA Chapter and the Caldwell County Conservation District.

The Food for America campaign is a national FFA project. It was established locally in 1979 when one student wanted her third grade class to visit a farm. The result has been an annual field trip for the entire third grade.

The trip was a two-day event, with half of the students visiting a grocery, farming operation and agricultural business on October 4 and the others on October 5. While one group spent time in the classroom with special guests, the other took a field trip.

Each day, the field trip began at Hancock’s Neighborhood Market, where students toured the aisles of vegetables, dairy products, meat, bread and cereal while agriculture teachers Wes York and Megan Roberts traced the grocery items back to the farm. Everything, from apples to zucchini, may come from

the local grocery, but it all started at a farm.

After the grocery store tour, the students traveled to the beef cattle farm of Elbert and Linda Bennett in Fredonia where they rotated through six learning stations.

Dee Brasher and Elbert Bennett talked to the children about his cattle operation. They discussed the nutritional and mineral needs of the cattle, and Dee stressed the importance of being safe around the animals.

Davie Walker showed the students how to make cornmeal using a grist mill. Each student was given the opportunity to shell corn with the hand-operated sheller.

FFA members Jacey Gill and Layne Bannister helped the children make butter. The children learned that a lot of hard work goes into making our food, but after sampling their product, all agreed it was worth the effort.

Buddy York demonstrated a 110 year old mill used to grind corn for chickens, make cornmeal, and even grind coffee. The children ground corn that will be used as chicken feed.

Marge Tinsley made apple butter which both kids and adults enjoyed, with many going back for second helpings.

Logan Young, Ellie McGowan and Ethan Shaffer served as “keepers of the zoo” – petting zoo, that is. Ellie taught the children that donkeys protect cows from coyotes and dogs as Logan rode Rufus, the donkey. Ethan allowed the children to pet chickens and ducks, and Ellie helped them befriend the potbelly pigs.

In the meantime, Donnie Boone portrayed Jacob Crider, who was born in 1798. He took the children back in time with a history lesson about the farm, the buildings and the town of Fredonia.

He told them about the inn built on the property and how the Trail of Tears came by the Bennetts’ property when the building was used as an inn. He talked about the 18 inch thick walls of the house and its 13 foot ceilings. He told them about travel by stage coach, and he spoke of the 100 Jersey cows brought from England, the cream that was sold as a result and how Fredonia became known for its sweet cream butter.

The children concluded the tour of the Bennett farm by bottle feeding a calf.

The next stop was Akridge Farm Supply in Fredonia. William Butts and David Huffstutter gave the children a tour of the agri-business. They saw where farmers come to purchase seed, feed and chemicals – all necessary for food production.

Betsy the Cow was on display at the Fredonia Woodman of the World Park. Student teacher Cacy Ellis gave the students some facts about milk production, and Betsy helped the students understand how a cow gives milk. FFA members were on hand to assist the third graders and to answer any questions they had.

Each day, the FFA students helped Nicky Baker of the Caldwell/Lyon Cattleman’s Association serve lunch in the park. Children and adults alike feasted on hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, cookies and drinks. But now, each knew the origin of these and many other foods. Each better understood the long journey food takes from farm to table.

After lunch, Kenergy employees presented a program on electrical safety. Kevin Board, Paul Duncan and Terry Frederick joined forces to demonstrate safety equipment and teach safe practices when around electricity.

After a full day of activities, students returned to the school playground and

cooled down with popsicles.

For those in the classroom, three sessions were presented.

Cody Baker of the FFA taught about tractor safety. He discussed the dangers of tractor hydraulics and how difficult it is for a tractor driver to see and hear.

FFA members Olivia Bloodworth, Lexie Wigginton and Hannah McIntosh presented a lesson on soybeans and their many uses in our daily lives.

Shelby Flood, Amanda Childress and Erica Gaither presented a lesson on healthy foods. The children sampled healthy snacks of cheese, fruit and summer sausage.

During the Food for America tour, the children were introduced to many facets of farm life and had the opportunity to see the farm as the ultimate food source. And yes, they now know the difference between brown eggs and white, so if you don't know where brown eggs come from, just ask a Caldwell County third grader.



Agriculture teacher Magen Roberts talks to third graders about food sources at Hancock's Neighborhood Market



Ethan Shaffer allows third graders to pet a chicken



Donnie Boone portrays Jacob Crider to provide a step back in time during Food for America farm stop



Kenergy employees Terry Frederick, Paul Duncan and Kevin Board taught electrical safety to third graders



Davie Walker helps third graders use a grist mill to make cornmeal



Elbert and Linda Bennett provided the setting for the farm tour during Food for America field trip

Butler County's Outstanding Cooperator and Master Conservationist

On Sept. 6, 2012 the Butler County Cooperative Extension Service hosted their annual field day at the Morgantown City Park. This year's event included a poultry station and cooking with alternative foods as well as other topics. Approximately 140 people were in attendance.

Shane Wells, Butler County Conservation District Chairman, recognized Maurice Henderson as the 2012 Butler County Conservation District Master Conservationist. Wells also recognized Mr. Steve Hampton as the 2012 Butler County Conservation District Outstanding Cooperator. At the end of the event participants enjoyed a meal pre-

pared by the Butler County 4-H.

Brent Barry, Butler County Conservation District employee, stated, "The turnout from the public and from vendors was excellent, the food was great, and the structure of events and the transition between those events was executed perfectly."

Farmers Are Prime Target For Meth Makers

The Wayne County Conservation District sponsored a field day concerning the potential hazards that the production of methamphetamines, commonly known as meth, pose to local farms and rural communities. Chris Lyon with Operation Unite was the featured speaker and conducted the meeting which included about 35 to 40 farmers in attendance. Chris provided information about what farmers need to be watchful for, not only on their farms, but throughout their community.

According to Lyon, there are hundreds of methods on how to make meth published online. He displayed several items that can be used in the manufacturing process of meth; including fuel, lye, ammonium nitrate fertilizer, lithium batteries and diet aids or cold medicines containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine. Graphic photos of scenes from meth labs in homes to ex-

plosions resulting in burned out vehicles were also showed to those in attendance.

Several examples were also given of what farmers can come into contact with on their farms. Meth labs have been located in barns and seldom used or abandoned buildings, under rock cliffs and on ATV trails. Meth makers often trespass around farm buildings looking for ammonium nitrate fertilizer. Older procedures to cook meth could take eight to 10 hours, but newer procedures reduce the cooking time to as low as 45 minutes. Guns are found at 80 percent of meth labs, and many labs are not discovered until there is an explosion. Farmers should contact law enforcement immediately if they discover two-liter plastic bottles with plastic tubing coming out the top or the bottle, as this is likely a mobile meth lab and can cause serious injury.

Treatment for an individual, including a meth maker, for an extensive burn can cost up to a million dollars in medical bills. Statistics show that in 2010 at the University of Tennessee hospital's burn center there were 34 "meth related" burn victims, accounting for 34 million dollars in cost. These burned individuals were uninsured and resulted in uncompensated expenses for the hospital.

Wayne County Attorney Tom Simmons and State Representative Beth Gregory were in attendance and answered several questions about meth laws. Simmons addressed a question about prison sentences concerning meth makers. He stated meth makers are now sentenced from seven to 10 years for their first offense. Gregory answered several questions about over the counter drugs used in the meth making process.

Hardin County Participates in First Connections Summer Celebration

The Hardin County Conservation District recently had the opportunity to participate in a program that was quite different than what they are used to. The Hardin County Schools Youth Service Family Resource Center sponsored the summer celebration for 210 children (ages 3-5) and their parents. Sta-

tions were set up so that the children and their parent could learn more about a variety of important health-related topics. Sarah Woods from the conservation district set up a station entitled "Edible Soils." She taught kids about the layers of the soil, and the kids were able to make their own layers from pud-

ding and cookies. The district also passed out free coloring booklets about soil and water.

This was a great success and allowed the district to reach many new urban clients throughout the community and within the school system.

Tornado Scars Forested Land in Eastern Kentucky

It has been nine months since the devastating tornado outbreak occurred in Kentucky. Visitors to some of the hardest hit counties, such as Morgan, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee or Johnson, have been able to see the resiliency of the residents. Debris has been removed, homes are being rebuilt, businesses continue to re-establish and open and people are going about their daily routines trying to achieve normalcy again. The havoc the March tornadoes wreaked on people's lives, homes and businesses is also able to be seen in the forested areas, which will take generations to regenerate. The storm event left a path of more than 90 miles of twisted, downed and uprooted trees.

Immediately after the tornadoes residents and volunteers set their priority on achieving habitable necessities, as the months passed, the ravaged land turned



green and somewhat camouflaged the devastation of the downed and uprooted trees that were so evident in the spring. Now that the fall and winter seasons have arrived, the realization of the

storm damage to the forest is again very obvious. With approximately 20,000 acres of damaged forest another potentially devastating disaster lurks in the midst. Much of the forest damage is in close proximity of homes and structures, and forest fires could result in another devastating loss to homeowners. With no short term solutions or cure to reduce these scars and forest fire risks, many conservation districts in these counties have been working on increasing awareness and assistance to

landowners. Districts are providing informational materials, encouraging landowners with significant damage to participate in cost share assistance programs when eligible and available, providing additional free tree seedlings to begin the restoration process and recommending landowners contact professional foresters or arborists for guidance and planning in managing the removal and regeneration process. This is a critical time for



districts in hard hit areas to promote tree restoration projects, provide workshops that assist and educate landowners on fire dangers and continue sponsorship of the tree seedling program.

Until major improvements are achieved in the damaged forest, severe risks of major forest fires will be a potential for quite sometime. With the increased fuel source, compounded by near drought conditions during summer months and the fall foliage now on the ground, residents in these counties are being highly cautioned through efforts of conserva-



tion districts, forestry officials and local

government units on the importance of exercising extreme caution with fire in and around wooded areas to reduce the possibility of a major forest fire.

Nelson County Conservation District Holds Field Day

The Nelson County Conservation District held an excellent forage and livestock field day on the farm of James Haydon on September 19. Haydon owns 176 acres with 70 cows and has operated his farm for almost 20 years. His operation started as a dairy farm, but now he raises Charolais beef cattle, and he built his operation to include a diverse forage operation and rotational grazing. Haydon now owns land in both Marion and



Mercer Counties and is very well respected in the community as an excellent livestock producer. Haydon has participated in both the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program to help address resource concerns, improve water quality and increase the success of his property.

The field day was well attended. It focused on many different topics including livestock health, body condi-



tioning, breeding and nutrition, hay and manure sampling testing and value, pasture health, pond health and Alpaca sales and diversification.

The conservation district, along with the Marion County Cattleman's Association, provided a meal, and farm tours were conducted. The district enjoys working with landowners that are conservation minded and hopes to continue to sponsor field days like this every year to showcase those landowners and promote programs.

Johnson County Hosts Conservation Day

Each fall once students have settled into the new school year, Johnson County Conservation District hosts their annual Conservation Day at Johnson County Park in Thealka. More than 350 fourth-grade students from Central, Flat Gap, Meade, Highland, Paintsville, Porter and W. R. Castle Elementary Schools, along with their teachers, enjoy hands-on activities provided by volunteers from the conservation district, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the local FFA chapter, US Army Corp of Engineers soils scientists and others. As the students attend each station they are able to experience a kind of learning that is not in the norm of their day to day classroom curriculum. The hands-on approach gains the full attention and participation of the students as they utilize and learn about their natural surroundings during this day of outdoor education.

NRCS Soil Scientist Alan Moore, with assistance from the Johnson County FFA chapter, taught students how to

build and use soil profile tubes. After completion each student got to take the tube home with them. Other presentations included animals from the Kentucky Reptile Zoo, tree and leaf identification provided by Division of Forestry personnel and wildlife presentations from Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists. The Johnson County FFA chapter also provided instruction and help in building birdhouses, which each student also took home. The students not only left the educational day with a wealth of knowledge, but also several tools to continue exploring and expanding their education of the great outdoors.



FFA students assisting the children with building birdhouses.

Goody bags were supplied by the US Corp of Engineers and other partner agencies to each student as well as the teachers. The teacher bags included classroom educational material and miniature green houses for continuing the course study on related natural resources back in the classroom.

For many years Conservation Day was funded with assistance through grants from Kentucky PRIDE; however, those funds have been eliminated. Johnson County Conservation District was able to secure funds through an environmental grant program funded through the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share Program. The district utilized the environmental grant funds to pay for the purchase of all the materials and fees associated with presenting the natural resource educational program for Johnson County students.

Meade County Conservation District Honors Arbor Day

On April 23, 2012 in honor of Arbor Day the Meade County Conservation District planted a Bradford Pear tree on the lawn of the Meade County Road Department. Those present from the Meade County Conservation District were Nathan Beavin, Chairman; Larry Schmidt, Vice-Chairman; Jim Scott, Secretary-Treasurer; Jamie Barger; Fred L. Sipes, Jr.; Charlotte Lawson;

Andrew Ford; and Cindy Carwile, district administrative secretary. Also present were Calvin Bohanon, NRCS district conservationist, and Shanna Drake, DOC field representative.

Cindy Carwile stated, "Every year the district plants a tree at one of the local businesses or schools in honor of Arbor Day. They feel this is a good opportunity to support the community while get-

ting the conservation message across."

The Meade County Conservation District also promotes soil and water conservation through support of the Jim Claypool Conservation Art Contest, the Conservation Writing Contest and the Meade County Fair.

Lawrence and Boyd County Supervisors Pass

Mr. Arlen V. Burton, chairman of Lawrence County Conservation District, passed away Oct. 15, 2012. He was a veteran of the Korean War, graduate of University of Kentucky, retired District Conservationist with 25 years of service, supervisor on the Lawrence County Conservation District board with 25 years of service, director for Lawrence County Farm Bureau for 26 years, former employee of the Lawrence County Board of Education as a substitute teacher and bus driver, member of American Legion in Kenova, WV, and

member of the Louisa United Methodist Church. He was an avid golfer, fisherman and a good steward of the lands with a passion for the great outdoors. Burton touched many lives throughout his and will sadly be missed. He was laid to rest October 19 in Nancy, KY.

Glenwood Young, Boyd County Conservation District board member, passed away after a brief illness Nov. 23, 2012. In his short term with the conservation district he became a valuable dedicated member promoting and supporting the

district's conservation goals. Young earned his bachelor's degree in environmental resources management from Pennsylvania State University. He was a very active individual, volunteering and working for numerous councils, committees and boards throughout Boyd County. Those who knew and worked with Young describe him as a friend for life, a family man and a supporter and advocate for agriculture and agriculture programs. Glenwood Young was laid to rest November 29 in Catlettsburg, KY.